Preventing Abuse Against Adults with Disabilities

PRESENTED BY LAURA HARDIN, LMSW

PRAESIDIUM

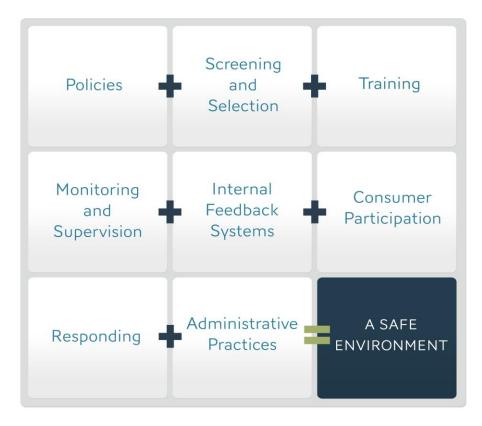
Our Passion. Your Protection.

About Praesidium

- Incorporated in 1992
- National leader in abuse risk management
- Over 4,000 clients internationally
- Train, screen, investigate, assess, and accredit organizations worldwide



The Praesidium Safety Equation®





What We Believe

- Abuse can be prevented
- Everyone is responsible for preventing abuse
- Abuse prevention requires a commitment
- Commitment starts at the top



Scope of the Problem

- 1 in 4 girls
- 1 in 6 boys
- Adults with disabilities are 2-3 times more likely to experience violent crime
- Adults with disabilities are 2 times more likely to be sexually assaulted
- 300% increase in client-to-client abuse
- 80% of abuse does not get reported



Impacts of Abuse on Your Organization

- Loss of focus on your mission
- Loss of financial resources for programming
- Decreased productivity
- Decreased employee morale
- Increased employee turnover
- Battered reputation



Three Risks You Face

- 1. Adult-to-Client Abuse
- 2. Client-to-Client Abuse
- 3. False Allegations



Who Abuses? Adult Offenders

- Type I: Preferential
- Type II: Situational
- Type III: Indiscriminate



How Offenders Operate

The APC's:

- Access
- Privacy
- Control



Policies

Importance:

Policies are important because they communicate a zero tolerance for abuse and create a bandwidth of acceptable behavior.

- Define boundaries
- Create institutional memory
- Communicate effectively



Red-Flag Behaviors in Adults

Physical

- Wrestles
- Tickles
- Massages
- Hugs too long or too often
- Lap-sits older children

Psychological

- Isolates clients from caregivers and peers
- Creates personal friendships
- Chooses favorites
- Overly involved

Behavioral

- Encourages breaking rules
- Keeps secrets
- Encourages alcohol use
- Encourages drug use
- Encourages use of porn
- Lets clients break caregivers' rules





Protecting Yourself from False Allegations

- Follow policies about appropriate and inappropriate physical affection
- Use the rule of "three or more"
- Don't show favoritism
- Avoid, address, and respond to crushes
- No secrets with clients
- No gift-giving to clients
- Do not discuss your weekend activities or sex life
- When in doubt, document



Screening & Selection

Importance:

Screening and selection are important because they control who has access to your clients.

- Encourage applicants to self-select out
- Assess abuse risk
- Is verifiable
- Behaviorally-based interview questions
- Integrate all information



Training

Importance:

Training is important because it teaches all staff how to perform their role in abuse risk management.

- Train preventative skill-based content
- Routinely schedule
- Use as "reminders"
- Make an active part of supervision



Monitoring and Supervision

Importance:

Monitoring and supervision are important because they decrease the opportunity for privacy and inappropriate behaviors.

- Monitor clients
- Supervise staff
- Manage high-risk locations
- Manage high-risk activities



Monitor and Supervise

High-Risk Locations:

- Bathrooms
- Showers
- Bedrooms
- Vehicles
- Isolated Areas

High-Risk Activities:

- Personal care assistance
- Sleeping time
- Periods of transition
- Transportation activities
- Free time
- 1:1



Training Supervisors

Ensure supervisors have the necessary skills to prevent abuse.

Key Skills:

- Evaluate and support
- Supervise and coach
- Assess risk to ensure safety



Internal Feedback

Importance:

Internal feedback is important because it sends information about the risk of abuse to all levels in the organization.

- Incorporate systems for reporting concerns, complaints, and grievances (including an anonymous method)
- Collect and analyze data related to preventing abuse
- Eliminate barriers to reporting



Consumer Participation

Importance:

Consumer participation is important because it involves caregivers and clients in abuse prevention.

- Empower clients to protect themselves from abuse
- Educate on appropriate boundaries with staff
- Provide caregivers and clients with multiple ways to report concerns



Responding

Importance:

Responding is important because it results in immediate response to red-flag behavior and to suspicions of abuse.

- Respond to tremors, not earthquakes
- Treat "near misses" as free lessons
- Procedures for responding to red-flag behaviors and client-to-client incidents
- Use a continuum of responses



Administrative Practices

Importance:

Administrative practices are important because they set and enforce zero tolerance.

- Communicate commitment to safety
- Develop system-wide abuse prevention standards
- Prevent drift from standards



Questions to Consider

- Does your agency have written polices that clearly define boundaries?
- Does your screening process assess for abuse risk?
- Do you require all staff to complete training that is preventative, not just reactive?
- Do you have specific procedures for monitoring highrisk activities related to abuse?
- Do you have a written procedure for responding to suspicious behaviors that do not rise to the level of abuse?



Discounted Services Available to Your Organization as an Irwin Siegel Client

- Criminal Background Checks
- Risk Assessment and Praesidium Accreditation[®]



Contact Us

Laura Hardin, LMSW Safety Analyst LHardin@PraesidiumInc.com

Praesidium www.PraesidiumInc.com

Follow us for the latest updates in abuse prevention.



